for Prohibition and Drug Abuse Prevention. Under this Scheme the Ministry is giving financial assistance to Voluntary Organisations for setting up of Drug Awareness Counselling Assistance Centres and Drug De-addiction-cum-Rehabilitation Centres, Organising De-addiction Camps and for Awareness Generation Programmes.

As a result of this Ministry's efforts, the number of Centres have increased from 7 in 1985-86 to 363 as on 31.3.96 of which 130 Centres are De-addiction-cum-Rchabilitation Centres and 233 are Counselling Centres.

The Ministry will continue to work for drug demand reduction programmes with greater emphasis on awareness generation, preventive education as well as rehabilitation and social re-integration of the drug addicts.

Patent related services in research and development activities

3446. SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have decided to provide patent related services free of cost for innovations resulting in research and development activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken special steps to collect indigenous knowledge on herbs in order to prevent foreign countries from patenting them?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The Patent Office through its libraries and inspection centres provide certain patent related services to general public free of cost, such as guidance to inventors to conduct search as well as filing of patent applications.

(c) Herbs as such are not patentable under the provisions of the Patents Act, 1970. The Botanical Survey of India is responsible for survey and inventorisation of plants in the country. It has so far surveyed 70% of the geographical area of the country and has identified 45,000 plant species.

Balance money under EPF and ESI Schemes

3447. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the balance of money at the end of each financial year during the last three years under the Employees Provident Fund and Employees State Insurance Schemes, respectively;

(b) what has been the use made of these amounts separately;

(c) whether any amount of EPF and ESI has been advanced to some Institutions;

(d) if so, the rate of interest and the total amount collected as a result thereof; and

(e) the rate of interest being paid to the employees credit and how much is the difference between,the total amount of interest collected from Institutions and interest paid to the employees in respect of both EPF and ESI?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) The requisite information is as given below:—

(Rs. in Crores)

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
EPF Balance	20289.37	23570.41	27483.13 (Provisional)
ESI Balance	2118.19	2384.53	2682.50